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AUGUSTA, MAINE, THURSDAY MORNING, JANUARY 28, 1864.

NO. 7.

Maine Farmer.

BERNARD HOLMES, Editor.
GEO. E. BRACKETT, Jr., Editors.
Our Home, Our Country, and Our Brother Man.

Mutton or Beef?

We would like to see some exact and reliable experiments that would, beyond dispute, demonstrate the comparative cost and value of mutton and beef. Not for the purpose of doing away with either in the market, but rather with a view to the increase of both, as well as the increase of true knowledge in regard to the production of both. The English are quoted as beef eaters par excellence, but they may with the same propriety be called mutton eaters too, for they probably produce better mutton and consume more than any other nation. We cannot get along without beef, and we ought not to get along, as we do, with so little mutton. In other words, more good mutton would add much to the economy of a healthier living. A little more mutton in our diet, and a little less beef and pork would, as we think, be not only better economy, but contribute essentially to a healthy living. The *Mark Lane Express* says that England is estimated to have 500 sheep to one square mile, while the United States proper (exclusive of the territories) has only 48.

Now this seems to be, and indeed is quite a difference; and it shows that, with all the beef-eating propensity of the English, they also exceed other nations in their regard for good mutton. This statement also demonstrates another fact which is thus expressed by the *Express*: "Apart from the mere question of the cheap production of wool, the experience of the most advanced agricultural nations, like England, Germany and France, goes to show that sheep are a necessity of a good general system of husbandry, on even the highest price level, and amid the densest population. They afford a much needed means of proportion to their own consumption of food, and any other domestic animal. They are believed to return more fertilizing matter to the soil."

Here are three positions in regard to sheep husbandry which are strong arguments in favor of it, and which refer more to their mutton producing properties than to wool. At present the excitement respecting the profits of sheep is based upon the high price of wool, the mutton properties are more or less ignored, and fine wools are all the rage. It is wise to look upon sheep as valuable only for the production of fine wool? Is it prudent to change the character of our flocks into those which will produce the most fine wool or the least amount of mutton carcasses, merely because this grade of wool at present commands a high price?

Admitting that the people demand a certain amount of meat, of some kind, if we reduce one of the great sources of it, we must increase the production in some other source. In this case either beef or pork or both must be more largely produced. Hence we should be glad to know what the comparative cost of a pound of beef and of mutton actually is. This knowledge alone could settle the question. At present, with what limited statistical knowledge we have in regard to the cost of beef and mutton, and taking into consideration the comparative value of each, viz., a steer for instance, grown for beef and a sheep for mutton, and the amount of fertility contributed by each to the land, we believe the balance would be found in favor of the sheep.

This is one of the questions in practical agriculture which would be much aided by the collection of the right kind of statistical knowledge, and it is to be hoped that in time, such knowledge may be obtained. We say in time, because, although attempts are made to collect such knowledge, they have but partially succeeded as yet.

Farmers do not yet manage so systematically with reference to such matters as to always know themselves, what to give as facts, and where they do, many are loth to give it lest by some means, it will be seized upon by the assessors as a basis to increase their taxes.

But, as we have said, we hope in time these obstacles will be removed, and we shall know by reliable facts which in reality pays the best—mutton or beef.

Sheep Racks.

One of our correspondents inquired a few weeks since, for a plan of a sheep-rack. We cut the following description of one from the *Country Gentleman*, as it seems to be simple, cheap, and easily constructed:

The corner posts are about three feet high, and are made of 3 by 3 inch scantling, one piece twelve feet long, making the floor. Inch boards are nailed on these posts, the top board being five or six inches wide, the bottom one about ten; the length of the rack may be about twelve feet, with two feet. On the horizontal boards are nailed either vertical strips, each five or six inches wide, and leaving spaces six inches wide, through which the sheep thrust their heads in eating. Boards are laid in the bottom on cross pieces, which connect the lower edges of the lower horizontal side board. These may be narrow strips with open spaces between them. The rack is now complete, any being thrown in at the top.

The lumber required for this rack—one piece of 3 by 3 inch scantling twelve feet long; two inch boards, ten inches wide and twelve feet long, four boards, five and twelve feet long, four and boards, five and ten inches wide respectively, and twenty-five feet of slats; fifteen feet of bottom boards complete the materials—the whole of these would be about ninety feet, and would cost seventy-five cents to a dollar and a half in different localities. Any farmer of fair ingenuity would make one in half a day—costing not to exceed two dollars for the whole—and paying for itself every month while in use, in the amount it saved.

We have received the first number of an agricultural journal entitled, the *Canada Farmer*, which is to be published semi-monthly, at Toronto, U. C. It is gotten up in good style, makes fair promises for the future, and having a wide field for circulation will no doubt prove a valuable acquisition to the cause of agriculture in Canada.

The *Cultivator* says that E. R. Andrews of Roxbury, Mass., lately sold a two-year-old Cotswold ram to Col. L. B. Norcross, of Bangor. He is a fine animal and will be likely to benefit the farmers "down east" in the production of long wool and fat mutton.

A Bundle of Queries.

We give below a batch of queries, some accompanied with remarks, and all open for whatever our correspondents may see fit to say upon each. Meanwhile we call upon our readers who are "posted" to give us their opinions and ideas in regard to the various questions which are here propounded from time to time in our columns:

SCRATCHES—REMEDY.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—I have a grey mare six years old last June, weighs about 900 lbs.; has been used more or less since she was four years old, but was used very little from August 1862 to October 1863, when she was in excellent condition, and has been kept so till the present time. She has what we call the "scratches" on both her fore-foot joints. I have oiled them and given her sulphur internally, all to little purpose. Her feet are small, snug ones, and I have an idea are too small for her weight of body. Can you or any of your numerous correspondents tell me how to cure her, or to help her? If you can you will confer a favor on a

SCRIBER.
No. Yarmouth, Jan. 15th, 1864.

NOTE. Our correspondent will find some remarks upon the cause, prevention and cure of this disease, in our issue of Jan. 14th, a portion of which we reproduce. The preventive, is simply cleanliness, and for a remedy thoroughly cleanse the parts in warm soap, dry and oil with some soft fresh oil, and keep the animal quiet and warm. Mayhew recommends the following to be used three times a day. For the early stages of the disease: animal glycerin, half a pint; chloride of zinc, half an ounce; water, six quarts; and the following for the advanced or ulcerated stage of the disease or "scratches": chloride of zinc, one ounce; creosote, four ounces; strong solution of white oak bark, one gallon. A simple remedy which is said to be effective in the early stages of the disease is a mixture of white lead and linseed oil, or lead and arnica, with which the diseased parts should be frequently anointed. Perfect cleanliness is indispensable in effecting a cure.—Eos.

CIRCUING HORSE—REMEDY WANTED.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—Having a valuable horse that is addicted to what is called circling, and not knowing whether there is any prevention for the habit, I would like for you or some of your subscribers through your valuable paper to inform me. My neighbors say that it will soon kill him. Any information on the subject would be greatly obliged.

Parkman, Jan. 1864.

NOTE. We find the following in an exchange, in regard to "circlers," and give it for the benefit of our correspondent:

"I found myself cheated to the amount of \$50 by the purchase of a horse as 'sound,' but which proved to be an inveterate circler. Various remedies were recommended and tried without success. Finally I found a preventive, if not a cure. I have arranged the stall so as to leave nothing against which he can press his head. He is fed from a low box which is pushed into the stall from a passage-way, and the box is withdrawn when not in use. It is said that a horse cannot circle, but he can press his head against the side of the stall, and in this way he can reach it to crib against its sides. Since adopting the above arrangement, the horse has improved in condition and spirit, and his value is also much increased."

MOWING MACHINES.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—I wish to inquire through your paper for the best mowing machine now in use in this State. There are several kinds about here, and the agents all recommend their pattern as the best. But I wish to inquire of farmers who have used the various kinds, and are not interested in the game of selling.

Norridgewock, Jan. 1864.

RAISING WHEAT.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—Will you inform me through your columns, the cheapest and best way to bring wheat from a well-thirty-five feet deep—the well being ten rods from the house.

Lincoln, 1864.

HARVEST.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—I would like to know through the *Farmer* if there is any cure for springing wheat, and what it is. Please answer the above and oblige a

SCRIBER.
Stoneham, 1864.

U. S. Agricultural Society.

The annual meeting of the U. S. Agricultural Society was held at Washington on the 13th inst., and the following were elected officers for the ensuing year: B. B. French, President, with one Vice President from each of the loyal States; Benj. Penley Foster, Secretary; Jos. F. Brown, Treasurer. Executive Committee—Lease Newcomb; John Jones; Delaware; Frederick Smyth, New Hampshire; Ward H. Lamon, Illinois; W. B. Todd, District of Columbia; Jas. S. Grinnell, Massachusetts; J. R. Dodge, Ohio.

A resolution was adopted favoring an exhibition of stock, agricultural machines, products of textile fibers, wool, products of sorghum, native wines, &c.; also, a resolution commending the system for the collection of statistics adopted by the Department of Agriculture and the publication of reports. The meeting then adjourned till the 24th of February.

Wool Growers' Convention.

The convention of wool growers which we have before given notice of, assembled at Columbus, Ohio, on the 5th inst., and was largely attended by sheep farmers and those interested in sheep husbandry. The subjects under discussion were:

1. To petition Congress so to amend the internal revenue laws, as to impose a tax upon dogs, with a view of protecting sheep from destruction by dogs. 2. That washing sheep is in itself injurious to sheep, and is no advantage to wool, and is only made necessary by the present custom of wool-buyers; and it is highly desirable that a reform be effected. 3. That the existing tariff on foreign wools is inadequate to the protection of American wool-growers.

A Monitor Hog.

A New Yorker has a hog of the Leicester and Suffolk, with a cross of the Berkshire breed, which weighed 1340 pounds last December, and is still growing rapidly.

ASSOCIATED DAIRIES. Two cheese factories are to be erected in Cheshire, Mass. They are to be ready for operation in the spring and one of them will consume the milk of four hundred cows.

The Annual Report of the Secretary of the Board of Agriculture has been distributed to the members of the Legislature, and those wishing for copies should make application to the member from their respective towns.

Communications.

For the Maine Farmer.

A Chat about Sheep.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—I see your correspondent from North Yarmouth seems to be in a dilemma about his worldly possessions. The elephant is obtained and his fleece not keeping pace with his board bill, W. B. is straitened, crying out "what shall I do?" about the daily feeding of his flock. I feel to sympathize with your correspondent, that hay, straw, corn, beans, &c., &c., should take a rise just at the "butter" is to be taken instead of "being pointed at."

The circumstances of your correspondent seem to be so opposite to your humble, downcast servant, that I thought I would write you about it and see if some good might not result from such a course. W. B. has the flock without the "butter" at a very trifling outlay of greenbacks. But to be serious, this sheep epidemic is one which, if rightly managed, will be long constitute one of the most successful branches of Maine industry, and one that will be looked upon as very of late years in this section of the State, if W. B., with a good market at his very door for everything that the sheep requires in feeding time, can in his good judgment in the raising of sheep, I would say why he should not name of all that is reasonable is that so few men of ample means are now engaged in this business? If any man of moderate capital will take a flying trip down here to Eastport, in a few hours he can be shown locations where sheep growing can be carried on at less than one-half the cost of feeding that can be in W. B.'s vicinity, and there he can see the sheep, and the market for wool, with the advantage of a heavier fleece of wool and a surer increase from his flock.

This may appear to some of your readers as a boast, but it is the fact, and it will require much of your "or any other man," that I will show him within a very few miles of the "jumping-off place," many locations where nature seems to have adapted itself to the raising of sheep, and admirably adapted to the business of sheep husbandry. I have reference now to many of our islands where old Neptune is a capital substitute for a very large portion of the fence that is so expensive where it is not needed. I have seen that all the bars and gates in this kind of fence, acts upon the self-closing principle, and are never found open by the carelessness of heedless servants. Then again, where fences are needed, they can be made at a much less cost than W. B. can make it, and of a material (cedar) which lasts for many years without much if any annual repairs. Some of the best sheep raising is done in this State, and it is required during the winter months, and when feeding is necessary, in times of severe snow storms, the feed can be grown at a low figure, hay excepted. And by the way, let me say that the amount of hay grown in this section is undervalued, and is not what it ought to be. In three years it ought and could be doubled from what it is now under the present system of operation. Then again, the hay is not properly cured, when properly dried, we can boast of the quality, and compete with the rest of mankind in quantity. Rata bags can be relied upon as a means of crop, and of the very best quality, except the feeding of sheep in this section, fully confirms your friend Taber's statement that you refer to in reference to W. B.'s queries.

Then again, our climate tends to give a good, fine fleece, and a good quality of wool, and the best kind of sheep. I will give one simple fact to illustrate what I mean by climate, good attention and feeding freely with rata bags, &c. In the fall of 1861, a certain number of ewes were sent from a butcher who could make no use of her in his business, she being so poor. In a few weeks the little thing became a pet with all hands, and she was sold for \$100.00. The next year she was sent to a tobacco smoke, she became a new creature, outwardly I mean, and in June, 1862, when she was about a year old, her fleece of very fine untraced cloth, and she weighed 150 lbs. She was a diseased sheep, and added to the credit of this side of the account, is the fact that these particular locations are entirely free from that favorite of nuisances to society, the dog, and the destruction of property in sheep in one year than the whole race of dogs on earth are worth, from the blood of that is used to catch the white soldier as well as the "big game" dog, and the destruction of property of that dog that we so frequently the bottom companion of the *softer sex*.

Again, we should take into account the non-accidents of taxes which amount to nothing, compared to what they will be in the future. So far as my observation can be relied upon, and by the way, I too have had the "sheep epidemic" for years past, more especially since I have been familiar with the natural privileges referred to above, for this branch of business, and all the reason that I am not now fully satisfied in this business and possessing the "elephant" in good trim, was for me to be an inveterate circler. This could be remedied by bringing into the country a few more of these sheep, and the destruction of tobacco smoke, she became a new creature, outwardly I mean, and in June, 1862, when she was about a year old, her fleece of very fine untraced cloth, and she weighed 150 lbs. She was a diseased sheep, and added to the credit of this side of the account, is the fact that these particular locations are entirely free from that favorite of nuisances to society, the dog, and the destruction of property in sheep in one year than the whole race of dogs on earth are worth, from the blood of that is used to catch the white soldier as well as the "big game" dog, and the destruction of property of that dog that we so frequently the bottom companion of the *softer sex*.

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For the ensuing year:—John Daves, President; Edward K. Whitney, Charles E. Stuart, Vice Presidents; William V. Carley, Secretary; Eusebius Hobbs, Treasurer; Saml. Thomas, Joseph Howard, Franklin Walker, Charles E. Stuart, and James P. Lowell, Directors.

WEST PENOBSCOT AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

At the annual meeting of the West Penobscot Agricultural Society, held at Kenduskeag, Jan. 6th, 1864, the following officers were chosen for the ensuing year:

President—J. C. Kenduskeag, President; Benj. Ball, Corineth, Francis W. Hill, Eusebius, Joseph P. Sineclair, Levant, Vice Presidents; Timothy P. Beldred, Kenduskeag, Secretary and Treasurer; David Barker, Eusebius, Agent and Librarian; E. J. B. Stacks, Kenduskeag, John Morrison, Corineth, Geo. Hamilton, Dexter, Trustees.

Agricultural Miscellany.

Observations on Orchards and Fruit Culture.

From experimental knowledge I make the following remarks: In the first place, success in fruit-raising depends upon the soil, the position of an orchard. I have found a cold, sandy soil, to produce large barren trees that required the best of cultivation to get a little fruit. For the last 30 years I have been engaged in the raising of fruit, and the roots of the trees I have dug up the sprouts or suckers and transplanted them, for the sake of continuing the variety, and they now constitute the best part of my orchard. I have always been taught by tradition that sprouts were suckers, short-lived, and not worth transplanting; but why should not a sprout be as promising as the scion grafted on the tree? If the roots of the suckers during the winter months, and when feeding is necessary, in times of severe snow storms, the feed can be grown at a low figure, hay excepted. And by the way, let me say that the amount of hay grown in this section is undervalued, and is not what it ought to be. In three years it ought and could be doubled from what it is now under the present system of operation. Then again, the hay is not properly cured, when properly dried, we can boast of the quality, and compete with the rest of mankind in quantity. Rata bags can be relied upon as a means of crop, and of the very best quality, except the feeding of sheep in this section, fully confirms your friend Taber's statement that you refer to in reference to W. B.'s queries.

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